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REMARKS

This paper is intended as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated August 30, 2006, having a shortened statutory period for response set to expire on September 30, 2006.

Claims 19-20 are conditionally withdrawn from the Application.

Claims 1-18 and 21-23 are pending in the Application.

Election/Restrictions

The Office Action has restricted the current application to one of the following groups:

- I. Claims 1-17, drawn to a process for producing hydrogen; and
- II. Claims 19-23, drawn to an apparatus for preparing synthesis gas.

Applicant would like the Examiner to note that Claims 21-23 are directed to the process as dependent claims of Claim 1.

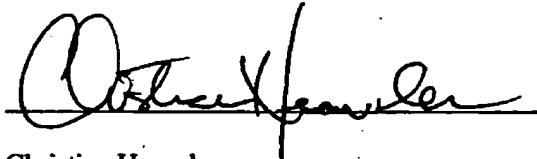
Applicant hereby elects Claims 1-17 and 21-23 (invention I) with traverse. Applicant hereby conditionally withdraws Claims 19-20 from consideration in this application pursuant to the Examiner's restriction request. Applicant reserves the right to re-file withdrawn claims in another application. Applicant reserves the right to rejoin the withdrawn apparatus claims that includes all of the limitations of the apparatus claims.

Applicant also notes that the Examiner has stated that Claim 18 is a linking claim between inventions I and II. Applicant's withdrawal of Claims 19-20 is dependent upon the non-allowance of Claim 18. If Claim 18 is allowed, Applicant will request that Claims 19-23 be rejoined and fully examined.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for his time on the matter.

Respectfully submitted,

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